LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

ABOLITIONIST — 1850 — 1865
FIRST ELECTED ILLINOIS OFFICIAL/COOK CTY BOARD

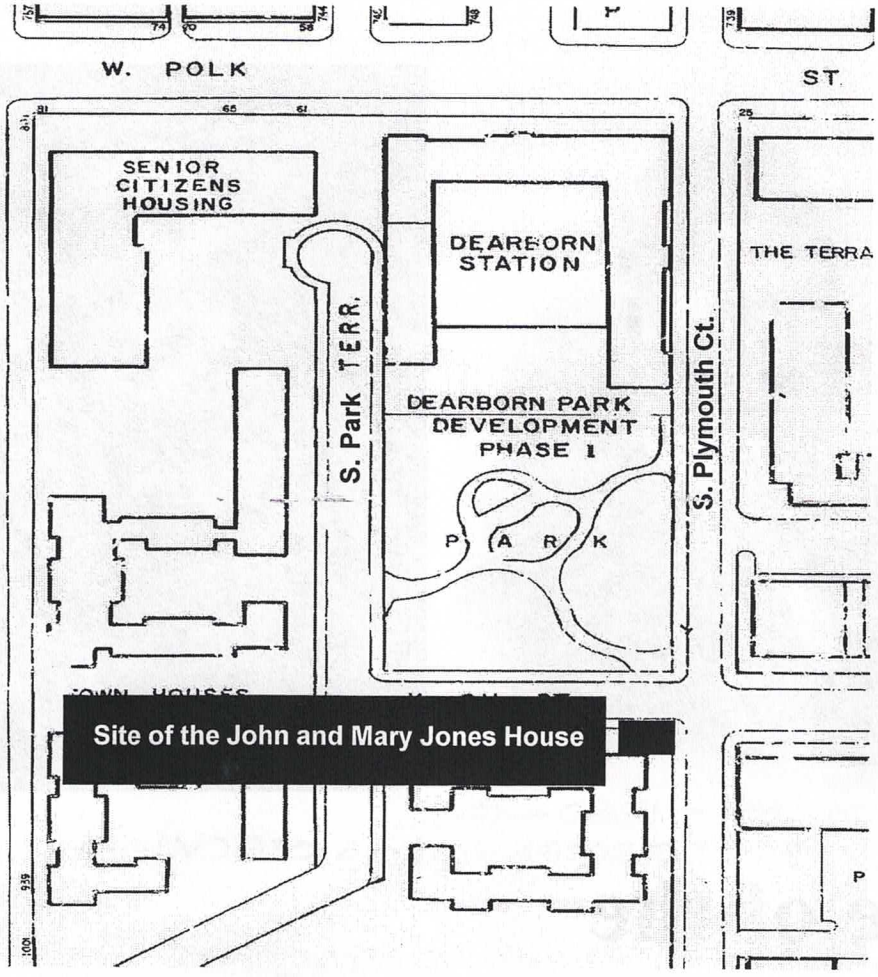
Site of the John and Mary Richardson Jones House

Southwest corner of West 9th Street and South Plymouth Court

Preliminary Landmark recommendation approved by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, October 2, 2003

CITY OF CHICAGO
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Denise M. Casalino, P. E., Commissioner



Cover: Portraits of John and Mary Jones, who were leading figures in the abolitionist and civil rights movements in mid-nineteenth century Chicago.
Above: The site of the John and Mary Jones House on Chicago's Near South Side.

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.

The landmark designation process begins with a staff study and a preliminary summary of information related to the potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the landmarks commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within the designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.

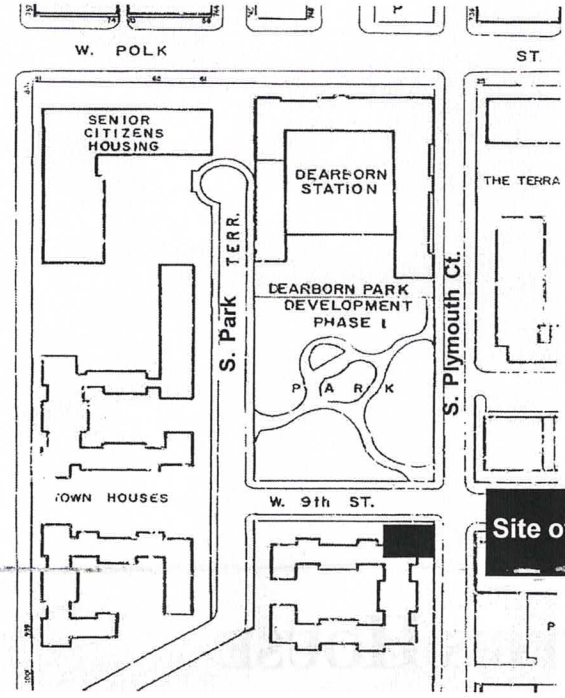
Site of the John and Mary Jones House

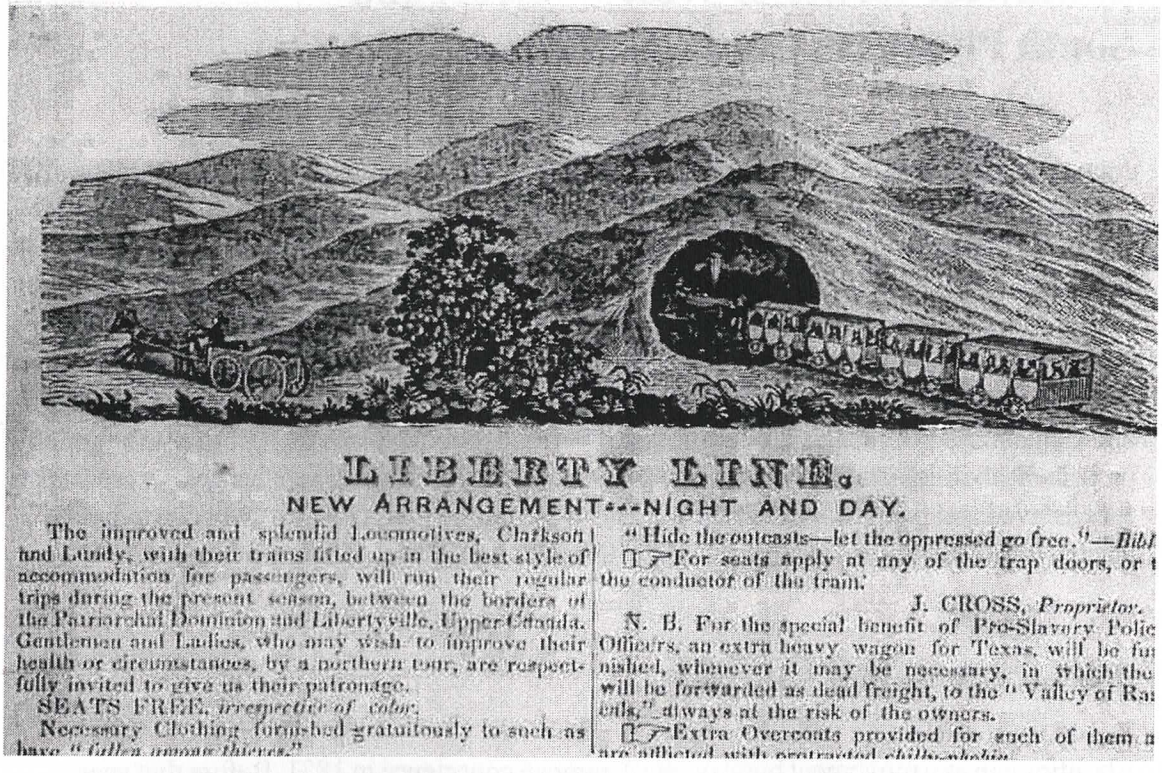
Southwest corner of West 9th Street and South Plymouth Court

John and Mary Jones are significant figures in the abolitionist movement in the early history of Chicago. John Jones was the undisputed leader of Chicago's emerging black community from the 1850s through the 1870s, rising to national prominence as an abolitionist and an early civil rights leader. Together with his wife, Mary Jane Richardson Jones, herself an abolitionist and early suffragette, the couple became central figures of the abolitionist movement in Chicago. John and Mary Jones used their home on Edina Place (now Plymouth Court) as a "station" on the Underground Railroad, which helped hundreds of fugitive slaves find freedom in the North and Canada. Their Chicago residence also served as a meeting place for locally and nationally prominent abolitionists and was the center of their life-long efforts to achieve greater civil rights for enslaved and free blacks alike. John Jones was also the first African-American to hold elected office in Illinois as a member of the Cook County Board of Commissioners.

Abolitionism and Chicago

Abolitionism as a movement burst on the American conscience in 1831. Before that year, slavery had been largely tolerated as a fact of life in the United States and had not yet become a widespread and divisive moral issue of the day. Three events in 1831 changed that: the highly publicized Nat Turner slave revolt, the beginning of David Walker's (a free black Boston merchant) public antislavery activity, and the publication of William Lloyd Garrison's abolitionist newspaper, the *Liberator*. The institution of slavery quickly





LIBERTY LINE.

NEW ARRANGEMENT---NIGHT AND DAY.

The improved and splendid Locomotives, Clarkson and Lundy, with their trains fitted up in the best style of accommodation for passengers, will run their regular trips during the present season, between the borders of the Patriarchal Dominion and Libertyville, Upper Canada. Gentlemen and Ladies, who may wish to improve their health or circumstances, by a northern tour, are respectfully invited to give us their patronage.

SEATS FREE, *irrespective of color.*

Necessary Clothing furnished gratuitously to such as have "fallen among thieves."

"Hide the outcasts—let the oppressed go free."—*Bibl*

☞For seats apply at any of the trap doors, or t the conductor of the train.

J. CROSS, *Proprietor.*

N. B. For the special benefit of Pro-Slavery Polic Officers, an extra heavy wagon for Texas, will be fu nished, whenever it may be necessary, in which the will be forwarded as dead freight, to the "Valley of Ra ends," always at the risk of the owners.

☞Extra Overcoats provided for such of them a are afflicted with protracted *chills-whshio*

Above: A 19th century political cartoon depicting the Underground Railroad. The Underground Railroad was a clandestine network of churches, residences and businesses mantained by abolitionists which helped thousands of fugitive slaves escape to freedom in the North and Canada in the decades preceeding the Civil War. John and Mary Jones were "conductors" on the Underground Railroad, and their home on Edina Place (now South Plymouth Court) served as one of the railroad's secret "stations."

became a defining issue that increasingly polarized and dominated the nation, ultimately leading to the Civil War.

The abolitionist movement came to Illinois in 1837 when prominent abolitionist Elijah Lovejoy, publisher of a weekly antislavery newspaper, the *Alton Observer*, was murdered by an angry mob in Alton, Illinois. The event galvanized the nation. Freedom of the press had been threatened, and abolitionists found in Lovejoy a martyr for the cause of liberty for people, both black and white. With the issue of slavery now brought so close to Chicago, secret abolitionist meetings evolved here into the Chicago Anti-Slavery Society in 1840. Three white Chicagoans led the society: Dr. Charles Volney Dyer, one of the earliest medical doctors in the city; Philo Carpenter, one of the City's first druggists; and the First Presbyterian Church's Reverend Flavel Bascome. The *Western Citizen*, the official newspaper of the Illinois Liberty Party and the voice of the local abolitionist movement, began publishing in 1842. The City was so staunch in its antislavery sentiments that the *Belleview Advocate* described it "as perfect a sink hole of abolition as Boston or Cincinnati." The *Cairo Weekly Times* noted Chicagoans were "undoubtedly the most riotous people in the state. Mention Negro and slave catcher in the same breath and they are up in arms."

By the 1840s, Chicago had become a key stop on the Underground Railroad, a loose and clandestine network of routes and hiding places for helping runaway slaves escape to Northern states or to Canada. Although the network did not involve actual trains, it borrowed the imagery from the world of railroading. "Station masters" and "agents" harbored fugitive slaves in their own homes or helped them move to the next hiding place or "station." In Chicago Dr. Dyer was the "station master," or head of the City's network. Other agents included Philo Carpenter, Allan Pinkerton, the City's first detective (and head of the Secret Service during the Civil War, and later of Pinkerton's detectives), and members of the city's small black community. It is impossible to obtain an accurate count of the fugitive slaves who passed through the City, but most journeyed on to Canada on foot or boarded *The Illinois* and *The Great Western*, lake steamers bound for Windsor, Ontario.

The beginnings of the African-American community in Chicago can be traced to the late 1830s when a small stream of fugitive slaves from the South and free blacks from the East formed the core of a small black settlement. (Chicago was, of course, first settled about 1785 by Jean-Baptist Pointe DuSable, a trader of African descent born in the present-day Dominican Republic or Haiti.) Between 1833 and 1845, the City's black population grew from 33 to 145 people. By 1850 the City's population of 23,047 included 373 blacks. Soon there was a substantial enough black population in Chicago to organize the Quinn Chapel African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church, and within a decade several more churches and a number of social and civic clubs were flourishing. By 1860 almost a thousand blacks lived in Chicago. Within this growing community, black leaders such as John Jones, Abram T. Hall, Henry O. Wagoner, and William Johnson emerged, focusing on abolishing slavery and securing citizenship rights for all blacks.

Despite the presence of an active antislavery movement in antebellum Chicago, the civil rights of blacks in the Illinois were often severely restricted. To be sure, the antislavery press on occasion noted approvingly the orderliness and respectability of the city's "Negro" community, but little was done to improve the status of the group. Chicago's blacks could not vote, nor could they testify in court against whites. Blacks had no rights to a public education, places of public accommodation and transportation. Chicago's white abolitionists largely regarded these conditions as side issues and manifested little interest in them.

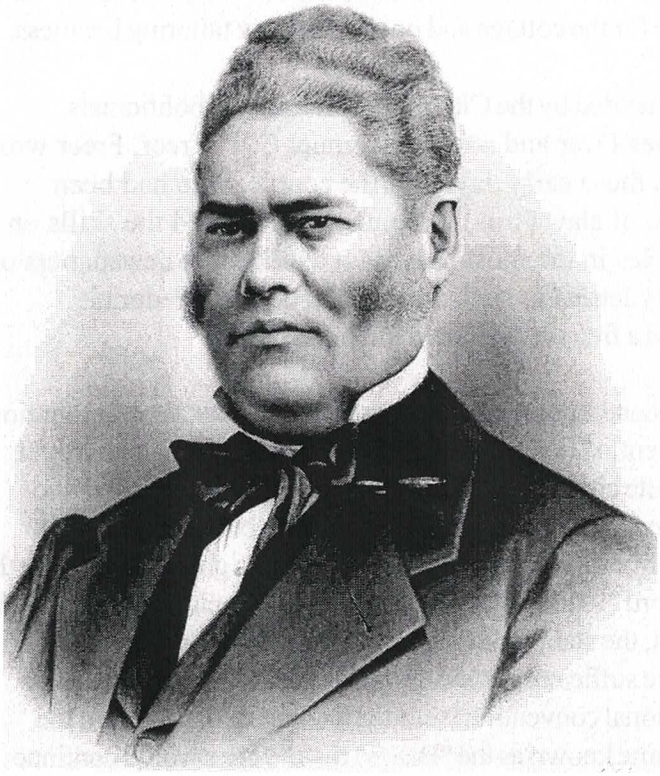
Although denied political power by law, black abolitionists, aided by their supporters in the white community, made their voices heard through committees, publications, conventions, and civil disobedience. Much of the abolitionists' work—especially the clandestine lines of the Underground Railroad in particular—was done by necessity in secret, making it difficult to document these activities or even the number of individuals or sites involved, although Chicago was a major stop on the Underground Railroad, and undoubtedly safe houses were located in the city itself as well as the surrounding then-unincorporated areas.

John and Mary Jones

Abolitionist, businessman, philanthropist and politician, **John Jones (circa 1816-1879)** was the undisputed leader of Chicago's black community from the 1850s through the 1870s, as well as a figure of statewide and national prominence. Jones was an outstanding businessman, civil rights leader and philanthropist, as well as a passionate abolitionist, supporting the cause through his personal fortune and his own work with the Underground Railroad. After the Civil War, Jones entered politics, and with significant white support became the first African-American to hold elected office in Illinois as a member of the Cook County Board. Throughout his public life Jones was able to advance the quest for equal rights as well as champion black solidarity. His wife **Mary Jane Richardson Jones (1819-1910)** supported him in his abolitionist and civil rights aspirations, especially through her own work with the Underground Railroad, and was also an early suffragette.

John Jones was born a free man circa 1816 in Greene County, North Carolina. His mother was a free woman of mixed African descent and his father was of German ancestry. Fearful that his white father or someone else in his family might attempt to enslave him, his mother apprenticed the young Jones to a man named Sheppard, stipulating that he be taught a trade. Sheppard subsequently moved to Tennessee and there bound the lad over to a tailor named Richard Clere, who lived near Memphis. Jones was in turn hired out to a Memphis tailor. In 1841, Jones was engaged to Mary Richardson, the daughter of a former slave who was a blacksmith. Nothing is known about Mary Richardson's early life in Tennessee until 1836, when the Richardson family relocated to Alton, Illinois, hoping to find better treatment. In 1844, Richardson and Jones were married. The couple had one daughter, Lavinia, born the previous year.

In 1845 the family relocated from Alton to Chicago, traveling by stage from Alton to Ottawa, and then by canal to Chicago. The trip took almost a week and was further postponed when the



Left: The leader of Chicago's black community in the mid-19th century, John Jones was a figure of national significance in the abolitionist movement in the years leading up to the Civil War, as well as the subsequent early civil rights movement to achieve equal rights for blacks. He was also the first African-American to hold elected office in the State of Illinois.

Right: Mary Jane Richardson Jones assisted her husband in his abolitionist and civil rights work and was also an early sufragette.

young family was stopped on suspicion of being escaped slaves. When the Jones family finally arrived in Chicago in March 1845, they had only $3.50 in their coffers. Setting up housekeeping in a one-room cottage at the corner of Madison and Wells Street, John Jones pawned his watch to raise money to buy two stoves—one for the cottage and one for his new tailoring business.

John and Mary Jones were quickly befriended by the City's most prominent abolitionists, including Allan Pinkerton, Dr. Charles Dyer and attorney Lemuel C. P. Freer. Freer wrote all of the Joneses' correspondence in these early days, but the couple, who had been denied an education under the system of slavery in the South, soon learned the skills on their own. John Jones published articles in the most important abolitionist newspapers of the day. Mary Jones composed family letters to such national leaders as Frederick Douglass, who was a lifelong friend and a frequent visitor to the Jones home.

In 1847 John Jones joined the Illinois Constitutional Convention's debate about the immigration of free blacks into the state. Some convention delegates feared that an influx of blacks would degrade white labor and antagonize white citizens. In September 1847 Jones published two articles refuting this position in the *Chicago Tribune*, later reprinted in Zebina Eastman's the *Western Citizen*. Jones maintained that blacks were citizens entitled to all rights, arguing that the founding fathers had not inserted the word "white" into the definition of free citizens, and that the ideals of the 18th century Enlightenment, the standards of republican government, and black service in the Revolutionary War all were sufficient grounds for recognizing black citizenship. Despite Jones' arguments, the constitutional convention included in the state constitution the anti-immigration provision, which became known as the "Black Laws." Jones would continue the fight against the Black Laws until they were repealed in 1865.

After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, abolitionist feelings increased throughout the North. In Chicago, John and Mary Jones became increasingly involved with the Underground Railroad. According to Jones' daughter Lavinia, John and Mary Jones were responsible for sending hundreds of fugitives to Canada throughout the 1850s and early 1860s through the Underground Railroad. Although the Joneses had obtained their own freedom papers, they put themselves at great risk through their involvement with the Underground Railroad. Under the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793, harboring or preventing the arrest of a fugitive slave was punishable by a $500 fine and possible enslavement for free blacks. Further, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 led to manhunts by mercenary slave catchers, many of whom were not beyond capturing and putting into slavery free blacks that had never been slaves. Supporting the Underground Railroad was both an expensive financial venture, and an intensively domestic endeavor. John and Mary Jones worked side by side as "conductors," providing food, shelter, clothing and money for transportation, and often bail and bond for fugitive slaves.

In addition to championing the cause of abolitionism, John Jones was a highly successful businessman. He parlayed his meager beginnings as a merchant tailor ("J. Jones, Clothes Dresser & Repairer") into a very successful business, catering to a largely white clientele. The *1851 Chicago City Directory* listed his tailoring business at 119 Dearborn Street (now 1 North Dearborn Street) and included this advertisement:

> I take this method of informing you that I may be found at all business hours at my shop, ready and willing to do all work in my line you may think proper to favor me with, in the best possible manner. I have on hand all kinds of Trimings for reparing Gentlemen's Clothes. Bring your Clothes, Gents, and have them Cleaned and Repaired. Remember that all Clothes left with me are safe, because I am responsible, and permanently located at 119 Dearborn Street.

The financial success achieved by John Jones made the Jones household the most affluent black family in Chicago. His wealth and business associations helped to conceal (even while supporting) his and Mary Jones' illegal abolitionist activities. The Joneses' wealth also allowed Mary Jones to lead an exclusively domestic life, a luxury offered to only a small number of black women at the time. Yet while Mary Jones' life resembled that of a respectable middle-class housewife, her household was far from typical. Many of her most "domestic" responsibilities were considered illegal under the Fugitive Slave Law. At one time her Edina Place home provided refuge to one of the most notorious fugitives of the day—militant white abolitionist John Brown and his band of followers, whose famed but unsuccessful 1859 raid at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, proved a turning point in the abolition of slavery. Brown was first brought to the Joneses' home by the esteemed black abolitionist Frederick Douglass. Mary Jones discussed with John Brown his proposed raids into Pennsylvania and Virginia, and Jones prophetically predicted that "somebody would have to give up his life before it was done."

Like the wives of many antislavery speakers and organizers (who were an almost exclusively male lot), Mary Jones often was responsible for holding the family's household and abolitionist activities together as her husband traveled throughout the country coordinating Underground Railroad networks and rallying other free blacks in the North. With Mary Jones' support, John Jones was also able to lead an active civic life. He was able to pursue, for instance, a successful campaign against Illinois' notorious "Black Laws," which deprived free blacks of many rights. Under the Black Laws, blacks could not testify in courts, sue, make contracts or purchase property. The Black Laws also prohibited blacks from visiting the homes of whites or from entertaining whites in their homes. They had no rights to an education, and had to file certificates of freedom with the county clerk to prove their status.

In 1864, John Jones, working with *Chicago Tribune* publisher Joseph Medill, published at his own expense a 16-page pamphlet entitled *The Black Laws of Illinois, and a Few Reasons Why They Should Be Repealed.* In his appeal, addressed to the people of Illinois, Jones quoted the Black Laws section by section and attacked each in turn. He based his arguments on constitutional and legal principals and upon right and fairness. Jones wrote:

> It is not the complexion or shades of men that we are discussing; it is the rights of all the inhabitants of the State, that we are advocating, for we are equally concerned and interested—the white, the black, and the colored. The interest of one, is the interest of all . . . Have we not eyes to see, intellect to understand, and hearts to feel, what other men see, understand and feel?

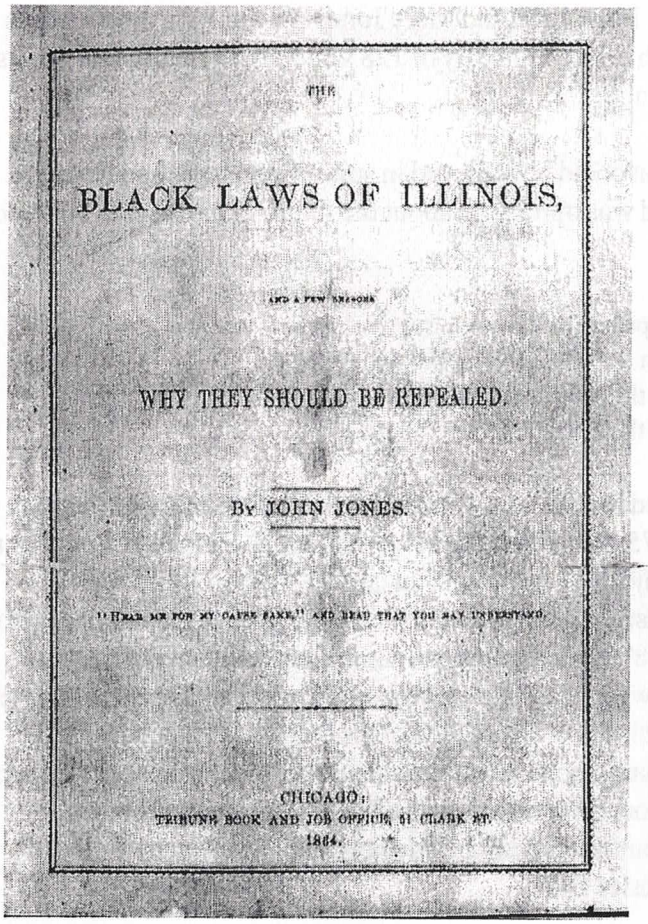
Jones concluded his publication with an eloquent appeal: "I assert, without the fear of successful contradiction, that the colored people of America have always been the friends of America, and thanks be to God, we are *today* the friends of America. . . ." Following a long and bitter fight, Jones traveled toSpringfield in early1865 and met with Governor Yates and legislators to discuss the repeal of the Black Laws. By this this time, with the balance of power in Illinois shifting to Chicago and the northern part of the state, both houses of the General Assembly passed the repeal of the Black Laws. On February 7, 1865, the newly-inaugurated governor Richard Oglesby signed a bill repealing the Black Laws. In 1866 Jones accompanied Frederick Douglass to Washington, D.C., serving on a committee that urged President Andrew Johnson to guarantee voting rights to former slaves.

John Jones was the first black to hold elected office in Illinois. Jones first became politically active in 1856 in a convention called to petition for the civil rights of blacks in the state. When a unified ticket of 15 candidates was made up for the Cook County Board following the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, Jones was proposed by the Republicans and unanimously accepted by the Democrats as part of a "Fire-Proof" bipartisan ticket. Powerful Republican leader and publisher of the *Chicago Tribune* Joseph Medill selected Jones for the slate, and, in the short-lived bipartisan spirit of post-fire Chicago, the Democrats accepted him. Like the rest of the ticket, he was elected practically without opposition for a one-year term in 1871, winning significant support from white voters. He was re-elected for a three-year term in 1872, but was defeated in 1875.

John Jones continued to play an important role in Chicago's public life after leaving elected office, particularly among the City's growing black community. His civic activities, including his work with the Vigilance Committee, were aimed at acquiring equal rights for blacks. He was quoted in the January 2, 1874, issue of the *Chicago Tribune*: "We must also have our civil rights; they must not be withheld from us any longer; they are essential to our complete freedom."

John Jones was a generous philanthropist, donating much of his fortune, estimated to be $100,000 prior to the Chicago Fire of 1871, to various charitable institutions and other philanthropies. While it is popularly believed that Jones donated the land for the the site of the Jones Commercial High School and that the school was later named in his honor, additional research has revealed that Jones did not donate the parcels for the school site and that the school was not named for him. Rather, the school was given the Jones name in1858 in honor of William N. Jones, a white man and Chairman of the Board of School Inspectors (now Chicago Board of Education) in recognition of his donation for books to school.

While working beside her husband, Mary Jones supported the early suffrage movement in Chicago, her home hosting leading suffragists such as Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt and Emma Chandler. It is possible that Jones first met Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton when they came to Chicago in February 1869 to address the first woman suffrage convention held in the city. In the late 1860s, Jones became increasingly involved in voluntary church



THE

BLACK LAWS OF ILLINOIS,

AND A FEW REASONS

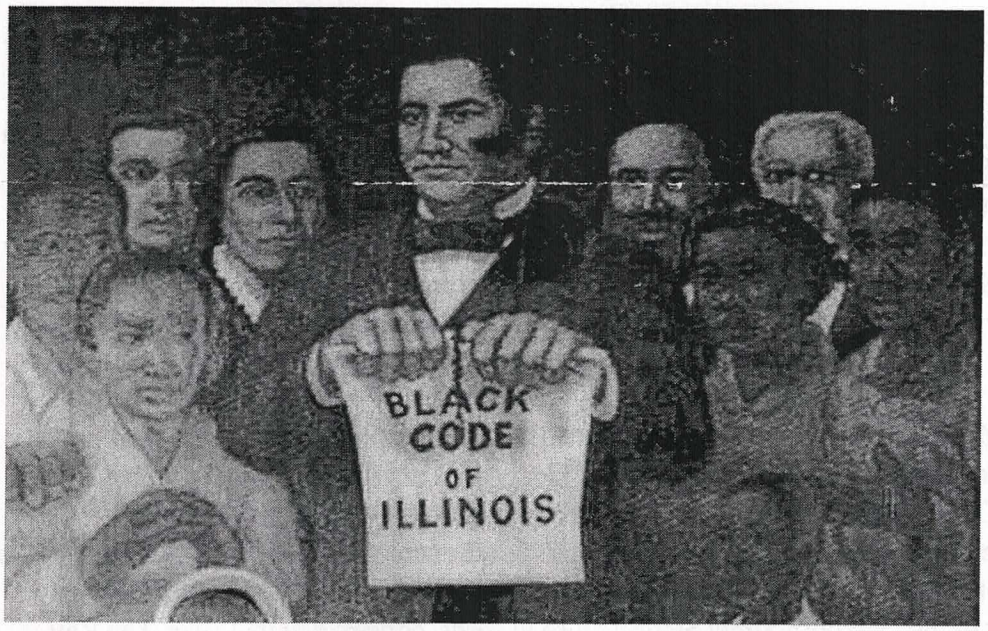
WHY THEY SHOULD BE REPEALED.

By JOHN JONES.

"HEAR ME FOR MY CAUSE SAKE," AND READ THAT YOU MAY UNDERSTAND.

CHICAGO:
TRIBUNE BOOK AND JOB OFFICE, 51 CLARK ST.
1864.

Left: The cover of John Jones' 1864 pamphlet calling for the repeal of Illinois' Black Laws. Under the Black Laws, blacks could not testify in courts, make contracts, or purchase property. Blacks also had no rights to an education and had to file certificates of freedom with the county of their residence.



Above: A contemporary illustration depicting John Jones tearing up Illinois' Black Laws following their repeal by the state legislature in 1865. Jones was almost single-handedly resonsible for the repeal of the Black Laws.

associations in the black community. In 1861, John and Mary Jones were among the founders of the Olivet Baptist Church. The church housed a library of 128 volumes, the first library of its kind open to African-Americans in Chicago.

John Jones' life was a testimonial to what could be achieved in spite of prejudice and injustice. He had faith in the American system and was optimistic about the future of his race. In 1874 he said:

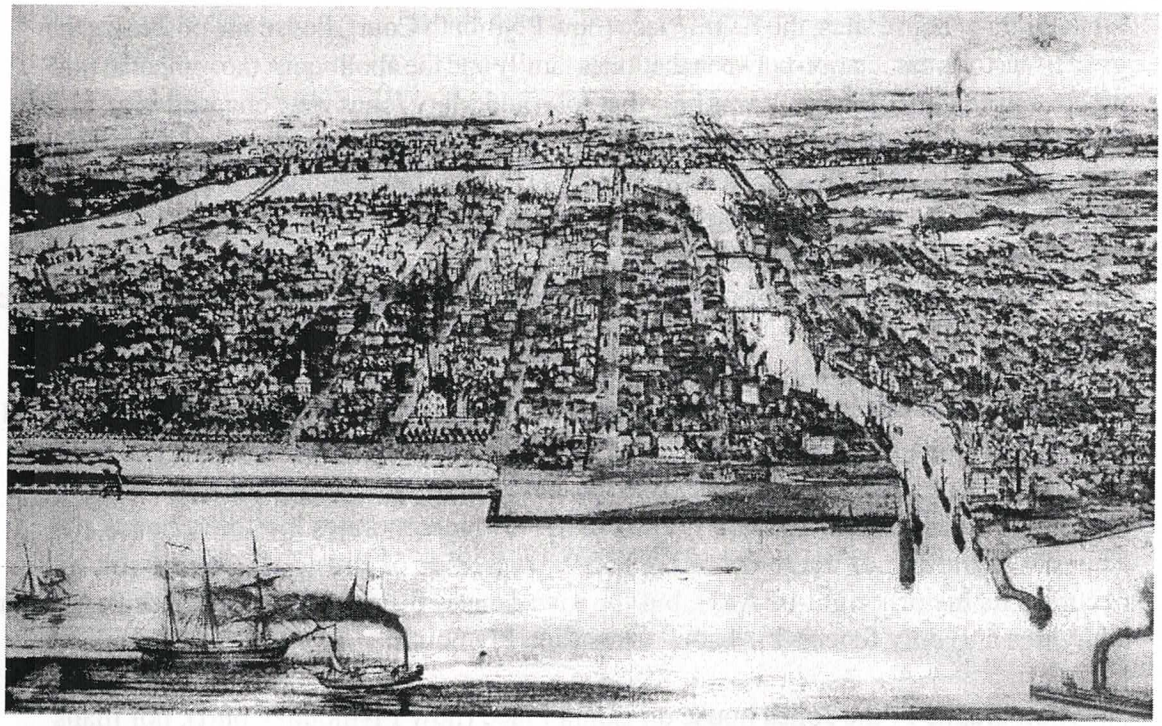
> Everywhere the black man has sprung of his own free will and determination, in spite of Church and State, from the position of slavery and its consequences, to the bar, to the pulpit, the lecture-room, the professorship, the degrees of M.D. and D.D. . .

In 1875, John and Mary Jones celebrated the 30th anniversary of their residence in Chicago. The *Chicago Tribune* of March 12, 1875, described the celebration at the Joneses' home as a "brilliant, fashionable and thoroughly enjoyable occasion." In late 1878, John Jones was confined to his home with Bright's disease, and it is probable that his wife took responsibility for his constant care. He died on May 21, 1879, bequeathing to his wife an estate worth an estimated $50,000. After she was widowed, Mary Jones, who had long been a member of the "Black 400" (as Chicago's black social elite was then called), continued in a leadership role. She lent her wealth and prestige to the many social reform movements growing out of response by affluent blacks to the influx of rural poor migrants from the South. Mary Jones died on January 2, 1910, and is buried at Graceland Cemetery beside her husband and near fellow abolitionists Allan Pinkerton and Dr. Charles Dyer.

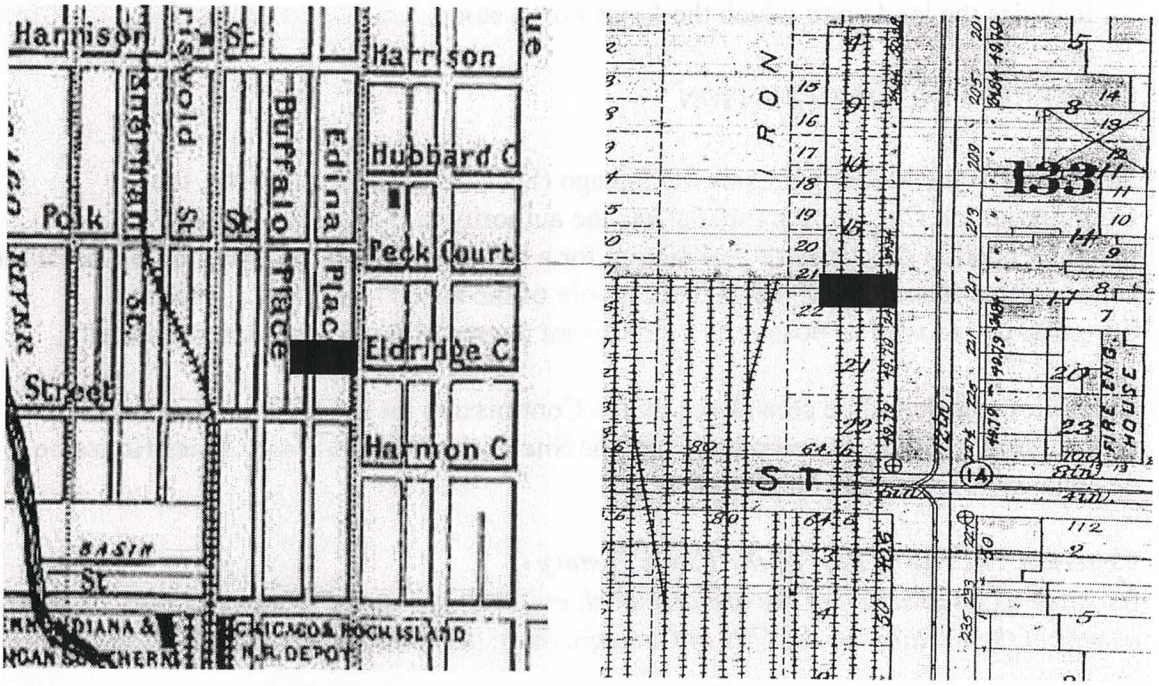
The John and Mary Jones House Site

Chicago city directories place John and Mary Jones at three different residences between 1850 and 1876. John Jones' place of business at 119 Dearborn Street (now 1 North Dearborn Street) was also the family residence from 1851 to 1856. The Joneses then moved to 218 Edina Place (later Plymouth Court, and now corresponding approximately to 946 South Plymouth Court / 947 South Park Terrace) where they lived from 1857 to 1872. Later they moved to the burgeoning South Side community of Douglas to 43 Ray Street (now 312 East 29th Place), where they lived from 1873 to 1876.

All three of these buildings have been demolished. If not demolished earlier, the Dearborn Street building was certainly destroyed in the Chicago Fire of 1871. Although the Edina Place (Plymouth Court) house was just outside the area devastated by the 1871 Chicago Fire, the Joneses, like many others, chose to move farther from the center of town in the aftermath of the Fire. It is not known exactly when the house was demolished, but by 1883 its location had become part of the Dearborn Street Station railroad yards, constructed that year. The Ray Street (29th Place) house was probably demolished in the 1950s as part of urban renewal; the building site is vacant.



Above: A bird's-eye view of Chicago in 1853 when John and Mary Jones were active in the City's abolitionist movement and the Underground Railroad.



Above left: The approximate location of the John and Mary Jones house on Edina Place (now Plymouth Court) from an 1853 map of Chicago. Above right: The house's location from Robinson's Atlas of 1886. Note that the site of the Jones house was by then occupied by the railroad yards of the Dearborn Street Station.

Of these three house sites, the Edina Place (now Plymouth Court) house site possesses the greatest historic association between the Jones family and the abolitionist movement in mid-nineteenth century Chicago. It was here that John and Mary Jones were engaged in much of their abolitionist work, most notably the couple's work as "conductors" on the Underground Railroad. This location also served as the meeting place for such nationally prominent abolitionists as John Brown and Frederick Douglass and Chicago black abolitionists. Additionally, much of John Jones' work to secure greater civil rights for African-Americans, especially the repeal of the Black Laws, would have been done while he lived at his Edina Place home.

The Plymouth Court house site was redeveloped as part of the Dearborn Park residential development that replaced the Dearborn Street Station railroad yards in the late 1970s, and a two-story light-gray brick townhouse condominium building, located on the southwest corner of S. Plymouth Ct. and W. 9th St., incorporates the Jones house site. The east elevations of the townhouses line the west side of Plymouth Court (which occupies its historic right-of-way), but the townhouses themselves have South Park Court addresses and only fenced-in "back" yards face Plymouth.

No photographs of the Jones house on Edina Place (now Plymouth Court), nor maps showing its footprint, have been located in Chicago archives. Because former address ranges for the Dearborn Street Station railroad yards are not available, the address of the Jones house site under the City's current address system cannot be exactly determined. The townhouse condominium complex on the southwest corner of Plymouth Ct. and 9th St. includes the land upon which the Jones house stood.

Criteria for Designation

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sect. 2-120-620 and -630), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a preliminary recommendation of landmark designation for a building, structure, object, or district if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for landmark designation," as well as possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Site of the John and Mary Jones House be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Critical Part of the City's History
Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois or the United States.

- John Jones was a figure of national significance in the abolitionist movement in the years leading up to the Civil War, as well as the early civil rights movements to achieve equal rights for blacks.

- John and Mary Jones were amongst the most prominent and significant leaders in the City's black community before the Civil War, and are significant in Chicago's and the State of Illinois' political, cultural and social history. Their involvement in the abolitionist movement, their early struggles to achieve civil rights for blacks, and their involvement in local and state politics (including John Jones' election as the first African-American from the State of Illinois), as well as their many civic contributions, make them esteemed figures in Chicago's history.

Criterion 2: Significant Historic Event
Its location as a site of a significant historic event which may or may not have taken place within or involved the use of any existing improvements.

- The John and Mary Jones site was a "station" on the secret Underground Railroad, an escape route traveled by numerous slaves who were fleeing the bondage of the South and seeking to make new lives for themselves and their families in the freedom of the North and Canada.
- The John and Mary Jones site was the location of many abolitionist activities in Chicago, an important movement in Chicago and the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. It was the meeting place of such prominent national abolitionists as Frederick Douglass and John Brown; and Chicago black abolitionists Abram T. Hall, Henry O. Wagoner, and William Johnson.

Criterion 3: Important Person
Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social or other aspects of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- John Jones was a national figure and leader in the abolitionist movement. He wrote, spoke and aided in the spread of the abolitionist cause and was a close friend and advisor of such nationally prominent abolitionists as John Brown and Frederick Douglass and Chicago black abolitionists Abram T. Hall, Henry O. Wagoner, and William Johnson. Mary Jones assisted her husband in his abolitionist work and was a leader in this effort in her own right, as well as an early suffragette.

- John and Mary Jones were "conductors" on the Underground Railroad, a clandestine network of churches, residences and businesses maintained by abolitionists which helped thousands of fugitive slaves escape to freedom in the North and Canada in the decades preceding the Civil War. Risking heavy fines or possible enslavement themselves, the Joneses provided food and shelter to fugitive slaves traveling on the Underground Railroad, as well as clothing, money for transportation, and often bail and bond.

- John Jones was the first African-American to hold elected office in Illinois as a member of the Cook County Board of Commissioners.
- John Jones was a passionate speaker and advocate who was almost single-handedly responsible for the repeal of Illinois' "Black Laws" which had sharply restricted the civil liberties of African-Americans in the state.

Integrity Criterion

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architecture or aesthetic interest or value.

The Chicago Landmarks Ordinance allows designation of sites of importance to Chicago history even when no buildings or other "improvements" from the period of significance survive. Although nothing remains of the John and Mary Jones residence on South Plymouth Court (formerly Edina Place), its location still conveys an association with important events in the City's history.

Significant Historical and Architectural Features

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

The John and Mary Jones residence on South Plymouth Court (formerly Edina Place) has not survived. The current building and other improvements located on the site are not significant features for this designation and would not be subject to the permit review requirement under the ordinance.

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CITY OF CHICAGO
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

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Denise M. Casalino, P.E., Commissioner
Brian Goeken, Commissioner for Landmarks

Project Staff
Michael Zimny, research, writing, and layout
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Terry Tatum, editing

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From "Black Aboltionists," *Chicago History*: p. 2 (bottom).
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From "The Illinois Black Laws," *Chicago History*: p. 9 (top).
From *The Underground Railroad in Illinois*: p.9 (bottom).
From *Yesterday's Chicago*: p.11 (top).

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual buildings, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, 33 N. LaSalle St., Room 1600, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; (312-744-2958) TTY; (312-744-9140) fax; web site, http:www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks.

This Preliminary Summary of Information is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation proceedings. Only language contained within the City Council's final landmark designation ordinance should be regarded as final.

CITY OF CHICAGO
COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

APRIL 1, 2004

RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHICAGO THAT CHICAGO LANDMARK DESIGNATION BE APPROVED FOR THE

SITE OF THE JOHN AND MARY JONES HOUSE
Southwest corner of West 9th Street and South Plymouth Court

Docket # 2004-08

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago:

Pursuant to § 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code of Chicago ("the Municipal Code"), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the "Commission") has reviewed the criteria for Landmark designation as they pertain to the **Site of the John and Mary Jones House**, located at the **Southwest corner of West 9th Street and South Plymouth Court**.

THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS HEREBY:

1. Finds, based on the "Landmark Designation Report" on the Site of the John and Mary Jones House and the entire record before the Commission, incorporated herein by reference, that the site meets three of the criteria for landmark designation as set forth in § 2-120-620 (1), (2), and (3) of the Municipal Code; and

2. Finds that the Site of the John and Mary Jones House satisfies the historic integrity requirement set forth in § 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code as defined in the Final Landmark Recommendation; and

3. ~~Incorporates~~ herein ~~and~~ attaches hereto as Exhibit 1 the ~~C~~ommission's resolution on the Final Landmark Recommendation for the Site of the John and Mary Jones House; and

4. Recommends that the Site of the John and Mary Jones House be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

The above recommendation was passed _____.

_____
Larry Parkman, Vice Chairman

Dated: _____

Exhibit 1

Resolution
by the
Commission on Chicago Landmarks
on the
Final Landmark Recommendation for Chicago Landmark Designation
for the
Site of the John and Mary Jones House
April 1, 2004

WHEREAS, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (hereinafter, the "Commission") finds that:

- the Site of the John and Mary Jones House (the "Site"), located at the southwest corner of West 9th Street and South Plymouth Court, meets three criteria for landmark designation set forth in § 2-120-620 (1), (2), and (3) of the Municipal Code of Chicago (hereinafter, the "Municipal Code") as specifically described in the Landmark Designation Report submitted to the Commission dated October 2003 (hereinafter, the "Designation Report"), and
- the Site satisfies the historic integrity requirement set forth in § 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, as described in the Designation Report in that, although nothing remains of the John and Mary Jones House, the location of the Site still conveys its association with important events and persons in the City's early history, and

WHEREAS, the owners of the Site have consented to its designation as a Chicago Landmark; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Development recommends the proposed designation of the Site as a Chicago Landmark and finds that it is consistent with the City's policies and plans for the South Loop community; now, therefore,

***Be it resolved by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks*:**

Section 1. The above recitals are expressly incorporated in and made part of this resolution as though fully set forth herein.

Section 2. The Commission hereby adopts the Designation Report.

Section 3. For purposes of § 2-120-740 of the Municipal Code, as no part of the John and Mary Jones House survives on the site, and current buildings and other property improvements located on the site are not considered significant features, no review of permits will occur as part of this designation.

Section 4. The Commission hereby recommends to the City Council of Chicago that the Site be designated a Chicago Landmark.